

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

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TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, IS

SUBJ: SOVIET PRESS DISLIKE ISRAELI "MILITARISM"

1. SUMMARY. PRAVDA ON SEPT 17 IN A COMMENTARY CRITICIZES
U.S. ARMS DELIVERIES TO ISRAEL, AND SAYS THAT THE LENGTHY
DELIVERY PERIODS FOR WEAPONS INDICATE THAT ISRAEL INTENDS TO
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DRAG OUT "ENDLESSLY" THE SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION TO THE MIDDLE

EAST PROBLEM. A CARTOON IN THE SAME PAPER SHOWS ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS AS MUSHROOMS GROWING ON ARAB LAND, WATERED BY FALLING RAIN SHAPED LIKE DOLLAR SIGNS. AN IZVESTIYA ARTICLE ON THE SAME DAY QUOTES (UNIDENTIFIED) U.S. COLUMNISTS TO THE EFFECT THAT ISRAEL COULD USE ITS OWN NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON ANY PERSHING IT MIGHT RECEIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A SEPT 17 PRAVDA COMMENTARY, GEORGIY KUZNETSOV SETS HIS SIGHTS ON U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TEL AVIV AND THE RAMIFICATIONS THEREOF. KUZNETSOV'S REFERENCE POINT IS PERES' VISIT TO WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS FINANCIAL AND MILITARY AID. KUZNETSOV CALLS THESE NEGOTIATIONS THE "FIRST SIDE EFFECT OF THE SINAI AGREEMENT." THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF PROMISED AID, WHICH KUZNETSOV CALLS THE PRICE REQUIRED TO ENTICE ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW FROM "A FEW SCORE SQUARE KILOMETERS OF OCCUPIED ARAB LAND", IS ABOUT \$2.5 BILLION OF WHICH \$1.5 BILLION IS TO BE MILITARY.

3. PERES' VISIT, ACCORDING TO KUZNETSOV, MARKS A NEW STAGE IN THE "REARMING OF THE ARMY OF THE ISRAELI AGGRESSORS." HE DECLARES THAT THE LENGTHY DELIVERY PERIODS FOR THESE WEAPONS PROVE BEYOND DOUBT THAT THE ISRAELI LEADERS INTEND TO DRAG OUT "ENDLESSLY" THE SEARCH FOR A FINAL AND JUST SOLUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM. KUZNETSOV POINTS TO ISRAELI "ANNEXATIONS" OF ARAB TERRITORY AS ADDING TO THE "POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE SITUATION."

4. A CARTOON ON THE SAME PAGE DEPICTS ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS AS MUSHROOMS GROWING ON ARAB TERRITORY, AND IS ACCOMPANIED BY THE CAPTION THAT THE ISRAELI MINISTER OF HOUSING CONSTRUCTION DECLARED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION TO CEASE CONSTRUCTION OF SUCH SETTLEMENTS.

5. IZVESTIYA'S (SEPT 17) COMMENTS ON THE PERES VISIT CONCENTRATE ON PLAYING BACK A WASHINGTON POST STORY ON POSSIBLE SALES TO ISRAEL OF F-16'S AND PERSHING. IZVESTIYA EMPHASIZES THE RANGE OF THE PERSHING AND THE THREAT IT POSES TO ARAB CAPITALS, AND ADDS THE COMMENT THAT (UNIDENTIFIED) AMERICAN COLUMNISTS NOTE THAT ALTHOUGH THE U.S.-ISRAEL AGREEMENT CALLS FOR DELIVERIES OF PERSHING WITH CONVENTIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WARHEADS, "THIS DOES NOT PREVENT ISRAEL FROM USING THESE MISSILES WITH NUCLEAR WARHEADS OF ITS OWN."

6. PRAVDA'S (SEPT 18) COVERAGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE CARRIES HIS COMMENTS ON A "SECURITY TREATY" WITH ISRAEL, AS WELL AS HIS DISCLAIMER THAT A FIRM COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE F-16'S AND PERSHING HAS BEEN MADE. PRAVDA ALSO QUOTES FROM THE WP ARTICLE, BUT STATES SIMPLY THAT THE

PERSHING "IS CAPABLE" OF CARRYING NUCLEAR WARHEADS.

7. COMMENT. KUZNETSOV'S REMARKS REPRESENT THE LATEST CHORD IN A RECENT PRESS THEME PORTRAYING ISRAELI SOCIETY AS OVERWHELMINGLY MILITARISTIC. AS THE SUPPLIER OF THE ARMS, THE U.S. HAS ALSO HAD ITS SHARE OF PROPAGANDA KNOCKS. THE LINE AIMED AT ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS, HOWEVER, HAS NOT BEEN SEEN LATELY, AND IT COULD REPRESENT A NEW TWIST BY WHICH MOSCOW CAN EXPRESS ITS DISSATISFACTION WITH SINAI II AND APPEAL TO ARAB SUSPICIONS INDIRECTLY. IZVESTIYA'S REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE USE BY ISRAEL OF ITS OWN NUCLEAR WARHEADS ESCALATES THE CURRENT PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN.

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